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Firecracker ban in NCR: SC seeks pan-India policy

The Supreme Court on Thursday raised pointed questions over the selective imposition of the firecracker ban in the Delhi-NCR region, saying if clean air was a right for "elite" residents of the national capital, the same must extend to citizens across the country. "If cities in NCR are entitled to clean air, why not people of other cities?... Whatever policy has to be there, it has to be on a pan-India basis. We cannot have a policy just for Delhi because they are elite citizens of the country," Chief Justice B R Gavai said.

Retired SC Chief Justice's demand to dissolve Nepal's parliament accepted

GEN Z PICK SUSHILA KARKI SWORN IN AS INTERIM PM

NEPAL has made history once again. The country's first female Chief Justice, Sushila Karki, has now become its first female Prime Minister. She was sworn in by President Ramchandra Paudel at his office on Friday. It followed the dissolution of the elected government headed by K P Sharma Oli.

Karki and the Gen Z protesters had made it clear that she would step in only after Parliament was dissolved — a demand that has now been fulfilled. Former PM Baburam Bhattarai and a clutch of diplomats, including from India, China and the US, attended the swearing-in ceremony. The composition of her cabinet is yet to be announced.

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September 12, the fifth day of the Gen Z protest, will be remembered as a defining moment in Nepal's political history — a day when the youth, united and resolute, toppled a government, dissolved parliament, and helped elevate a woman known for her anti-corruption crusade to the highest executive office.

This unprecedented movement inspired young people globally, proving that when youth unite, they can dismantle entrenched regimes and expose decades of corruption.

Born on 7 June 1952 in Biratnagar, Karki is no stranger to challenges. She became Nepal's first female Chief Justice in July 2016 and served until June 2017. During her tenure, she faced a no-confidence motion from the Nepali Congress but remained steadfast in her commitment to justice and transparency.

Throughout her career, she refused to bow to political pressure or corruption — a reputation that made her the natural choice to lead the country through this transitional period.

The Gen Z protest, which began on September 8, quickly escalated into a nationwide uprising. Streets across Nepal saw widespread vandalism, with both public and private property damaged. Daily life came to a standstill, hitting daily wage earners particularly hard. In the process, the hidden wealth of top political leaders was exposed. Reports of sacks of cash found in the homes of Nepali Congress president Sher Bahadur Deuba and Foreign Minister Arzoo Rana Deuba have shocked the nation. Enraged citizens — not just Gen Z protesters — vandalised the residences of several accused leaders. CONTINUED ON P11

Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel administers the oath of office to Sushila Karki as prime minister on Friday | PTI

MARRIED A REVOLUTIONARY

- Karki is the eldest of seven siblings
- **She grew up in a simple farming family in Biratnagar**
- Karki married Durga Prasad Subedi, an erstwhile popular leader of Nepali Congress. They had met during her days at the BHU
- **Subedi was a youth revolutionary member of Nepali Congress during the 1970s**
- He was part of the group that hijacked a Royal Nepal Airlines aircraft to get INR 3 million to fund the party's armed revolution against King Birendra Shah in 1973
- **The hijacked plane carrying Nepal Rastra Bank's money landed at Forbesganj in India**
- After retirement, Karki wrote two books, including 'Nyay', her biography

SNAP POLLS IN SIX MONTHS

President Ramchandra Paudel said the new caretaker government is mandated to hold fresh parliamentary elections within six months

Major scare as plane loses wheel, lands safely

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mumbai

A SpiceJet Q400 aircraft carrying 75 passengers made a safe emergency landing in Mumbai on Friday after losing a wheel shortly after takeoff from Kandla airport in Gujarat.

The aircraft landed at Mumbai airport's Runway 27 at 3.51 pm with all passengers and crew safe, Mumbai airport operator MIAL said. Operations at the airport were briefly impacted.

The flight departed at 2.38 pm against the scheduled time of 1.25 pm from Kandla and landed in Mumbai at 3.51 pm, as per information available on flight tracking website Flightradar24.com.

"On September 12, an outer wheel of a SpiceJet Q400 aircraft operating from Kandla to Mumbai was found at the runway after take-off. The aircraft continued its journey to Mumbai and landed safely," the airline said in a statement.

There were 75 passengers onboard the Bombardier Q400 plane, which is used for operating regional flights, officials said. One of the officials said that one rear right wheel of the aircraft was missing.

Without naming the airline, MIAL said an aircraft from Kandla made an emergency landing at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport after a technical issue.

CASTE CENSUS

Exercise to cost ₹420 cr; report likely by Dec: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE Social and Educational Survey, called the caste census more informally, will be conducted from September 22 to October 7 by as many as 1.75 lakh enumerators, covering over 7 crore population of the state. The survey is estimated to cost Rs 420 crore and the report is expected to be ready by December this year, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah told the media here on Friday.

He said the Kantharaju and Jayaprakash Hegde caste census reports are old and based on the survey conducted in 2015. The new survey has been entrusted to Madhusudhan Naik, who is heading the Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission. The state has over two crore families.

"Through the new survey, we aim to get data on our government's guarantee schemes. The commission has assured us that the report would be submitted by December," he said.

"The government chose 1.75 lakh school teachers as enumerators as Dasara vacation is coming up. Each enumerator will cover 120-150 houses and will be paid Rs 20,000. Though the enumeration will cost Rs 325 crore, the state government will pay Rs 420 crore. If needed, the government will pay more," he said.

Several technologies will be used in the survey to make it accurate and comprehensive. Each household will be geo-tagged using the Revenue Registration Number of electricity meters and will be given a Unique Household ID (UHID). So far, UHID has been issued to 1.55 lakh homes. Asha workers will visit each house and give the format that has 60 questions. When enumerators visit, people can answer these questions. P4

8 die in Hassan as truck runs over procession

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Hassan

EIGHT persons were killed on the spot, while 25 others were injured after a speeding truck ploughed through a Ganesha idol immersion procession at Mosalehosahalli village in Hassan taluk on Friday night. Eight of the injured are in a serious condition.

The police said the truck, which was speeding, was heading towards Mysuru from Hassan when the accident occurred. The driver reportedly lost control of the vehicle while trying to avoid a motorist. CONTINUED ON P7

Shabby probes beat purpose of SIT, give advantage to culprits: Spl court

EXPRESS EXCLUSIVE

YATHIRAJU @Bengaluru

THE Special Court for the trial of cases under the Prevention of Corruption Act has raised serious questions over the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of Karnataka Lokayukta probing illegal mining filing 'B' reports (closure reports) and letting off the prime accused in the chargesheet in many cases.

The Special Court said, "Needless to say, the SIT has been constituted to undertake the investigation and subject the real culprits of illegal mining in the state to law, to protect the public property and prevent the huge financial loss at the hands of the vested interests. But the shabby, poor and incomplete investigation at the cost of the valuable time, huge manpower and public money not only defeats the very purpose for which the SIT came into existence, but also becomes an advantage for the true culprits to escape from their criminal liabilities. In fact, the investigation at the hands of the SIT in all other cases which are pending before this court is no better than this condition. Many cases are seen to have ended in filing of 'B' Reports (closure reports), and the go-by given to the prime accused persons in a considerable number of cases pending before this court."

The court ordered that a copy of this order be sent to the SIT chief to ensure further investigation and submit an additional report within two months. CONTINUED ON P5

ASIA CUP: AT ₹12L/10 SECS, INDIA-PAK MATCH TOPS ADVERTISERS' BILL

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @Bengaluru

THE Indian cricketing economy continues to remain recession proof. Post the ban on real money gaming, it was looking at a hole but it's on course to pass its first big test — ad rates for the group-stage encounter between India and Pakistan on Sunday as well as selling all available ad slots for the said game.

Over the last few years, advertisements around live coverage of cricket's marquee properties were fronted by real money gaming firms. But their exit hasn't affected the market. Media planners have told this daily that the broadcaster, Sony Pictures Networks India (SPNI), has sold 'all ad inventory for the India-Pakistan match'. Ad inventory is basically the total space made available by the broadcaster to the advertisers to purchase. It's expected that ad rates for the Sunday encounter has been sold for well over ₹12 lakh for a 10 second slot. With there being the potential of two more matches between the rivals, the interest may only rise.

India captain Suryakumar Yadav and Pakistan skipper Salman Agha | FILE PIC

It also kind of paints a picture as there has been intermittent calls of boycotting the game (some Indian brands did actively become part of this post the Pahalgam tragedy in April). But that hasn't translated into reality as some big companies have come on board. "It's all a question of visibility," says Prahlad Kakkar, an advertising guru, whose commercials came to dominate the cricketing ad space in the nineties and naughts.

"It's worth to pay ₹20 lakh for a 10 second slot for a game between India and Pakistan because everybody is watching it," he says. "Even your personal cabbie will take time off to watch it. People watch it because it becomes more than a game in their eyes." Kakkar is of the opinion that this particular game has become bigger than the game because 'of the sentiment involved'.

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